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FROM : AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

REF :

November 22, 1954

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	ACTION	DEPT.
	EUR-5	OC/R-2 OLI-6 S/S-2 G-1 S/P-1 C-1 IO-4 P-1
	REC'D 11-26	OTHER CIA-7 ARMY-3 NAVY-3 AIR-3 OSD-4 USIA-10

SUBJECT: Finnish Note Replying to USSR Invitation to General European Security Conference

The Finnish note replying to the USSR invitation requesting Finland's participation in a general security conference of European nations was delivered to the Soviet Government at 12 o'clock noon Moscow time on November 19 by Finnish Minister Gartz, and the text of the note was published in the Helsinki morning press for November 20. While it is clear, from comment reaching Helsinki from Western capitals, that a satisfactory translation has been disseminated by news agencies active here, it may nevertheless be worthwhile for this Embassy to put on record its own translation, the text of which follows:

"The Finnish Government greets with satisfaction every initiative and measure toward the consolidation of peace among nations. For this reason, it assumes an affirmative attitude toward the summoning of the conference proposed by the Soviet Government.

The Finnish Government is prepared to consider in a favorable sense the proposal made in the Soviet Union's note that peace in Europe should be secured, in harmony with the aims and principles of the United Nations organization, through the establishment of a general European security organization which should be founded upon the thesis that all states, great and small, irrespective of their social or political systems, should participate in it.

The Finnish Government, in consonance with this view, declares that it is prepared to participate in a joint conference of the nations which have received invitations, to be conducted on the basis set forth in the foregoing paragraph."

The Embassy has not yet had opportunity to obtain confirmation of the fact that this reply was drafted in the President's own hand at a Cabinet meeting held on November 17, but since the report which contained this bit of information was accurate in other particulars, the Embassy sees no reason to doubt the assertion. Of course, the story does not reveal how much of the position adopted,

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rather than merely of the phraseology used, was the President's own work; it is quite possible, and even perhaps likely, that the Cabinet came to the President agreed upon a position essentially like the one here expressed, and that the President's contribution lay primarily in finding appropriate language.

The impression in Finland thus far is that the answer is a very satisfactory one from the point of view of Finnish interests. It is courteous and cordial, affirmative in its language, and yet in the light of surrounding circumstances negative in its effect. By referring to the desirability of participation in any security arrangement on the part of all states which have received invitations, both great and small, and irrespective of their social or political systems, it gives indication even now that Finland is indisposed to attend any "rump conference" of satellite states the Soviet Union may convene if its original proposal falls through, as seems likely. Furthermore, the Finnish Government gives itself some credit for handing in an early reply, on the basis of views which are wholly its own, rather than a delayed reply referring to already expressed views of other recipients of invitations.

In commenting upon this note most papers of the capital have made essentially favorable statements, and the criticisms expressed have been minor ones. "Helsingin Sanomat" did not think that the note had made it clear enough whether Finland made it a condition of participation that all, or at least the most important, of the nations invited should participate as well; but the paper conceded that it seemed certain that Finland would not attend if the Western powers did not.

On the other hand, "Tyokansan Sanomat" considered Finland's "affirmative" reply "most natural" and says "the entire peace-loving people of our country, for its part, has every reason to approve the favorable answer and to support participation in the security conference proposed by the Soviet Union. The endeavors of war-seeking Rightist circles, which are directed against the fundamental interests of our country, must unconditionally be repulsed". "Vapaa Sana's" article reflected similar gratification, and similar disregard of the fact that while the wording of Finland's reply was "affirmative," in effect the reply was most likely to prove a "negative" one.

Surveying the universally favorable newspaper comment, "Helsingin Sanomat" remarked that the press was "agreed - for once."

For the Chargé d'Affaires a.i.:

H. Bartlett Wells

H. Bartlett Wells
First Secretary of Embassy

1442